

Every Child Learning Every Day



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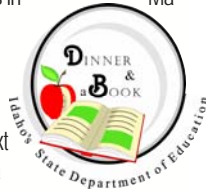
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READY TO LEARN

Start the new year with old favorites

From Reading Rockets

"The Story of Ferdinand," by **Munro Leaf**. Ferdinand is not an ordinary bull. Instead of kicking and fighting and butting heads like the other young bulls, he prefers to sit and smell the flowers. When Ferdinand unwittingly sits on a bee while men are searching for the fiercest bull for the bullfights in Madrid, his dramatic reaction gets him chosen! Black and white illustrations and understated text create humor and a message of nonviolence.



"Harold and the Purple Crayon," by **Crockett Johnson**. Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the classic story of Harold, who turns an ordinary walk into an extraordinary adventure! With his purple crayon and vivid imagination, he draws his way into and out of trouble. Simple line drawings - including lines from Harold's crayon - complement the simple text for a story that celebrates creativity and problem solving using a tool with which every child is familiar!

"Goodnight Moon," by **Margaret Wise Brown**. Goodnight room, goodnight moon ... In this bedtime classic, a small bunny says goodnight to his room and all the things in it. Rhythmic, gently lulling words and warm, equally lulling pictures combine to form a perfect end to a toddler's busy day.

"The Very Hungry Caterpillar," by **Eric Carle**. This modern classic introduces children to the life cycle of a butterfly through luminous illustrations, pages with die-cuts that grow with the caterpillar, and predictable language. The butterfly that emerges from the cocoon, though no longer small or ravenous, continues to thrill readers of many ages.

State-sponsored preschool in Idaho? Who knows

Dear Reader:

Is state-sponsored preschool on the horizon for Idaho?

That's a question I'm hearing more and more often. I wish I knew the answer.

When I first took office, a state foray into preschool seemed possible, as the Legislature considered funding pilot preschool projects across the state as part of its Idaho Reading Initiative.

The pilot project proposal ultimately failed, and poor economic times limited any discussion of adding preschool as lawmakers scrambled to maintain current services.

But with a recovering economy and a state discussion about how to better prepare children for the future, the issue is beginning to surface again at a state level with newspaper articles, new advocacy groups, and buzz about allowing



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

schools to offer preschool to all students, and perhaps providing funding for full-day kindergarten.

With this interest, we also have seen renewed debate about what type of learning experiences chil-

dren should have in their preschool years and the importance of parents as their child's first teachers.

It remains to be seen what will come of the current discussion.

Regardless of what happens, I see the State Department of Education continuing to be a partner with parents of preschoolers and with providers of early childhood care and education.

That partnership includes this monthly newsletter, a weekly newspaper column, and maintaining a staff member within the department to focus on school readiness issues.

The early years are important and, whatever direction Idaho takes, the department remains committed to every child learning every day.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Shape shifters gets kids moving, teaches about shapes

Physical Education (P.E.) Central is a website (www.pecentral.org) where educators and others share lesson plans for activities aimed at different age groups.

Activity

Shape shifters

Purpose of activity

To learn and be able to recognize different shapes and colors.

Materials

Construction paper, radio/tape/CD. Nice to have: Laminating machine so paper does not tear.

Description

Create different colored shapes on big pieces of paper (8-10 inch). Laminate. Place them on the floor and play music while the

children walk around them (depending on the type of floor the shapes may need to be taped down so children will not slide). When the music stops the children should move to and stand on a shape. Ask the children "who is standing by a square, circle," etc., and ask what color they are standing on.

Other locomotor skills can be added as well as concepts of directions and pathways. "Can you walk backward in a straight pathway? When the music stops, quickly move to a colored shape." "Gallop in a curved pathway around the shapes."

Variations

Use basic shapes for Pre-K. For older children use octagons, dia-

monds, hexagons etc. If having shapes taped to the floor creates a safety concern, tape the laminated shapes to cones or walls and have children move to stand by a shape.

Assessment

Hold up shapes and ask children to name the shapes. As children leave the class, hold up flash cards with shapes and see if individual children can identify them.

Adaptations

Ask children with restricted movement to name the shape another child is standing on. Children in wheelchairs can move chairs over the shapes on the floor.



PARENT TIPS

Centers offers flu prevention info

The Centers for Disease Control has specific guidelines to help prevent the spread of influenza in child care settings. Below are some suggestions. The complete guide is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/childcaresettings.htm>

Spread of the Flu

The main way that flu is spread is from person to person through coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from the cough or sneeze of an infected person travel through the air and reach the mouth or nose of people nearby.

Preventing Spread of the Flu in Child Care Settings

Vaccination against the flu each fall remains the primary way to prevent this disease. Vaccination, along with other measures, also may help to decrease the spread of influenza among children in the child care setting and among care providers.

Encourage influenza vaccination for children and care providers in child care settings. Influenza vaccine is recommended for all children 6-23 months of age, care providers of children 0-23 months of age in the child care setting, and persons under two years of age who have high-risk medical conditions for influenza-related complications.

Remind children and care providers to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand rubs, and make sure that supplies are available.

Encourage care providers and children to use soap and water to wash hands when hands are visibly soiled, or an alcohol-based hand rub when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly soiled.

Encourage care providers to wash their hands to the extent possible between contacts with infants and children, such as before meals or feedings, after wiping the child's nose or mouth, after touching objects such as tissues or surfaces soiled with saliva or nose drainage, after diaper changes, and after assisting a child with toileting.

Encourage care providers to wash the hands of infants and toddlers when the hands become soiled.

Encourage children to wash hands when their hands have become soiled. Teach children to wash hands for 15-20 seconds (long enough for children to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).

LAWS

Group eyes changes to Idaho child care requirements

Current child care code provides for minimum health and safety standards for centers with 13 or more children, but leaves children at smaller facilities vulnerable to unsafe conditions and personnel.

With child care advocates and providers throughout the state, Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children has crafted legislation that would extend child care center health and safety state licensing standards to any program providing care for two or more unrelated children for compensation.

Some of IAEYC's proposed changes include:

- * Require a criminal history background check for anyone who may have contact with children through the program.

* Require a child care program to disclose to parents, staff and the licensing agency if an immediate family member, who may reasonably be on the premises, is a sex offender. This disclosure must be in writing and include a photograph.

* Lower staff/child ratios for children under 36 months. For the purposes of staff/child ratios, allow only adults providing direct care to children to be counted and count all children on the premises.

* Prohibit smoking and/or alcohol consumption during operating hours.

* Prohibit firearms and weapons in day care centers. Day cares located in residences must store firearms and weapons unloaded in a locked cabinet that is inaccessible to children.

* Designate that a functional telephone must remain on the premises during the hours of operation.

* Require child care providers to be trained in pediatric CPR and First Aid and receive eight hours of training annually.

* Require a fire and health inspection of the premises.

More info is available at www.idahoaeyc.org

SMART STARTS

Help foster child's creativity, learning style

Children's approaches toward learning include their motivation, attitudes, habits and cognitive styles that are demonstrated as they engage in learning and respond to different situations. Children may express their approaches toward learning in varying ways according to their personality and cultural upbringing.

Birth to 1 year

Let your child explore within boundaries, keep a safe environment while providing a variety of objects with different textures, sounds, and shapes. Cooking utensils, plastic,

metal, soft, hard, bumpy and smooth can be used to stimulate your child.

1 to 3 years old

While on a walk on in the car with your child, talk about what you see, not only the color or how many, but where animals live, what they eat, etc. You are expanding your child's ability to think about several attributes of an object or living thing, and helping develop problem solving skills.

3 to 5 years old

While driving say, "I wonder why that dump truck has such big wheels." Allow your child time to think and

process the question. He may or may not answer. You can add, "What do you think?" if your child does not respond.

Skills needed for kindergarten

Children need problem solving skills, reasoning and curiosity when they enter school. These skills will build social, emotional and intellectual connections for success.

Books and other resources

"I Wonder Why I Blink, And Other Questions About My Body" by Brigitt Avison, and "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie" by Laura Joffe Numeroff.

ART

Snow activities can help motor activities, art project

By Jennifer Williams
2002 Idaho Teacher of the Year

I haven't met a child yet who doesn't like to experience snow. Winter offers many opportunities to do just that and to promote physical development. Children will spend hours running, hopping, skipping, bending, walking, wrestling, rolling, and climbing through snow hills, trenches, caves, and mounds that are made from the snow.

These activities will promote large motor activities. Patting, shaping, slicing, scooping, poking, reaching, and carrying snow will help the finer, or small, motor movements.

Touching, smelling, tasting, and seeing are all sensory motor activities,

along with hearing the snow crackle under your shoes or hitting the side of your wet snowsuit.

There are such a variety of activities that can be done in the snow to allow children the freedom to move, climb, laugh, twist around, dance, or squeal with delight.

Play pretend games like "chase the bear through the snow," "digging for snow clams," "finding the exit to the maze," or "pinning the button on the snowman."

The idea is to create situations in which the children increase their coordination, balance, and master a variety of movements and motor skills.

Outdoor activity

Kids can build snowmen from shapes that can be created by filling a

variety of buckets, bowls, cans, and pans with snow. After the snowmen are created, fill spray bottles with colored water (water colors or tempera paint) and make your very own blue, pink, or green snow families! Just remember, "don't eat the colored snow!"

Indoor activity

Cut grapefruit-size circles of colored construction paper. Mix any color of tempera paint with white glue in a pie pan (half and half). Create a variety of colors. Cut fruits or vegetables in half (oranges, star fruit, apples, peppers).

Brush the glue/paint mixture onto the fruit/vegetable half and create snowflakes on a sheet of colored paper.

Embellish snowflakes with glitter and hang them when dry.